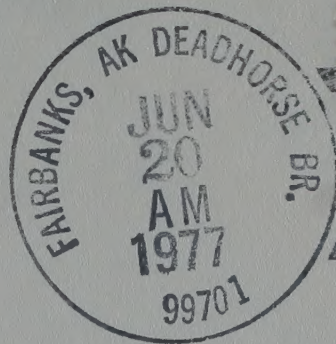


TRANS-ALASKA PIPELINE
Oil On Stream • Prudhoe Bay — Valdez



Rec'd: Nov 29/77

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THE TRANS-ALASKA PIPELINE

The postmark on the face of this souvenir envelope marks the date that oil from Alaska's Prudhoe Bay oil fields along the Arctic Ocean began flowing south some 800 miles to tide-water. Approximately 30 to 45 days later, the first oil will arrive at the Prince William Sound port of Valdez which is ice-free the year around. The arrival date is backstamped on the reverse side of the envelope.

The Trans-Alaska Pipeline was built at a cost of nearly \$8 billion - the largest privately financed construction project in the world. Eight major oil companies--Sohio, British Petroleum (BP), Atlantic-Richfield (ARCO), Exxon, Mobil, Union, Phillips Petroleum and Amerada Hess - formed a consortium to design, build and operate the pipeline: the Alyeska Pipeline Service Company.

Begun in April, 1974, the final weld was placed on May 30, 1977. This weld climaxed nearly a decade of discovery, debate and determination that began when ARCO and Exxon confirmed the presence of oil at Prudhoe Bay in July, 1968. Plans for the pipeline's construction were announced in March, 1969. The State of Alaska leased the Prudhoe Bay fields for \$900 million. Applications for right-of-way permits were submitted in June, 1969, which touched off a series of court and legislative battles with environmental groups. Congress passed, and the President approved, the Trans-Alaska Pipeline Authorization Act in November, 1973.

To facilitate construction along the 54-foot right-of-way, a 360-mile haul road was constructed in 1974 to parallel the pipeline route from the Yukon River (the end of the state highway system) to Prudhoe Bay. The first pipe, 48 inches in diameter, in lengths of 40 and 60 feet, and in thicknesses of .462 and .562 inches, respectively, was placed in March, 1975, and the last section in December, 1976. Approximately half of the pipeline (supported by almost 80,000 vertical support members) is constructed above ground, half is buried.

During the start-up phase of its operation, the pipeline will carry 600,000 barrels of oil a day. However, its capacity is 1.2 million barrels, expected to be reached by January 1, 1978. With the addition of pumping stations and terminal facilities up to 2 million barrels of oil could be pumped from the North Slope fields whose estimated recoverable reserves are 9.6 billion barrels. The Valdez Marine Terminal will be able to load oil tankers, for the marine leg of the pipeline to West Coast ports, at the rate of 80,000 to 100,000 barrels an hour.

The cachet for this souvenir cover was designed by a distinguished Alaska artist, Byron Birdsall of Anchorage, President of the Alaska Watercolor Society. The cover was prepared and sponsored by the

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